

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF
CITY OF ALAMEDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2007
7:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Wetzork called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Wetzork. Commission Members: Autorino, Bonta (arrived at 7:34 p.m.), Dahlberg, Lindsey, Ryan, Schmitz, and Zuppan (arrived at 7:32 p.m.)

Absent: None

Vacancy: (1)

Staff: Dorene Soto, Eric Fonstein, and Rosemary Valeska

2. MINUTES

2.a. Minutes of the Special Meeting of September 19, 2007

Motion (Dahlberg), seconded, and unanimous to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 19, 2007 as submitted.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

(None)

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC

(None)

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. NEW BUSINESS

Motion (Zuppan), seconded, and unanimous that Item 6.c. be taken before Item 6.a.

6.b. Recommendation to Endorse the Proposed Mixed Use Development at 1629 Webster Street

Ms. Soto recapped the written staff report. Public speaker: Kathy, Moehring, Executive Director of the West Alameda Business Association, spoke in favor of the EDC's endorsement of the project, noting that Webster Street has been waiting for a project like this. Motion (Autorino), seconded, and unanimous that the EDC endorse this project.

6.c. FY 07/08 Budget Information

Mr. Fonstein recapped the budget information contained in the handouts provided in the agenda packet and answered Commission Members' questions. In reference to the issue of decreasing automobile sales tax to the City, Ms. Soto noted that Mr. Fonstein had helped recruit Concise Optical to Harbor Bay Business Park. Concise Optical manufactures contact lenses, and the sales tax they will generate will greatly offset the loss of automobile sales tax. This item was presented for information, only; no EDC action was requested.

6.d. Appoint one EDC Member to the Consultant Selection Committee for the Park Street Business District North of Lincoln Strategic Plan

Mr. Fonstein recapped the written staff report. Responses to the RFP are due by November 6. Staff was requesting that the EDC appoint one member to serve on the consultant selection committee. The Chair appointed Commission Member Lindsey, who had volunteered to serve on this committee. Staff will also be requesting that the Planning Board appoint a member. The Park Street Business Association Executive Director and one board member will also be on this committee. Consultant finalist interviews are currently scheduled for November 15.

6.a. Recommendation to Endorse the Update to the Economic Development Strategic Plan

Chairman Wetzork stated that the draft report represented a lot of work. He recommended that the EDC Members be allowed an additional month to study the report and make their recommendations at the next meeting. Commission Member Zuppan moved for the continuance, with the condition that the EDC Members could ask questions at this meeting. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Fonstein noted that due to an oversight, Auto Row was missing from the Appendix A matrix, and this would be corrected.

7. REPORTS

7.a. Oral Report: Chairman Wetzork – Chair of the Economic Development Strategic Plan Update Subcommittee

Chairman Wetzork stated that the Subcommittee had a spirited meeting the previous week. He requested that Commission Member Dahlberg provide a further update.

Commission Member Dahlberg stated that the single most important change in Alameda since the 2000 EDSP was prepared is Alameda Point. Motion (Dahlberg) and seconded that Alameda Point be included as the eighth strategy in the EDSP update. Discussion followed.

Commission Member Zuppan asked how Alameda Point would affect the other strategies. Commission Member Dahlberg stated that Alameda Point is the “elephant in the room,” and that you could influence history if you could influence the planning. He added that there is nothing more important than the development of Alameda Point in the next ten years. Commission Member Zuppan asked what was gained by calling out the Point in the EDSP. Commission Member Schmitz asked if the EDC should be thinking in terms of how we will use the strategies for Alameda Point. Commission Member Dahlberg stated that we need to take out the Point in order to plan the Point. He added that if EDC does not get a hold of the planning group, EDC will only be an audience.

Ms. Soto stated that what she was hearing was that Commission Member Dahlberg wants to know what role the EDC will play in the development of the Point, separate from the EDSP. Commission Member Dahlberg stated that the EDC needs to be in the negotiations or they become spectators. Commission Member Schmitz stated that EDC needs to assert resolve on this issue, and that they need to be at the table at all times, not just getting a report. Commission Member Bonta stated that he agreed with the importance of Alameda Point. He added that the strategies can be applied to different projects, and all these strategies would apply to Alameda Point. He also stated that the role of the EDC going forward needs to be addressed. Commission Member Autorino recommended that the EDC should table this, look at the strategies, look at Alameda Point, and see how it fits.

Chairman Wetzork referenced Item 9.c. regarding the Alameda Point Advisory Task Force. He read from the Planning staff memo regarding the composition and role of the Task Force as determined by ARRA on October 16.

Commission Member Zuppan stated that Alameda Point could be a separate call-out by showing how the strategies apply to the Point. Commission Member Dahlberg stated that the document doesn't put enough emphasis on Alameda Point. Chairman Wetzork stated that he agreed with Commission Member Zuppan's approach, and that addressing Alameda Point separately would defeat the purpose of the strategic plan.

Commission Member Schmitz requested that the vote on Commission Member Dahlberg's motion not be taken at this meeting. He stated that the Point is the most important thing we face and that the EDC can get to a point where they can take the leadership. He stated that he did not want to be in a position where he felt he was agreeing with both Commission Members Dahlberg and Zuppan, and the EDC was not able to convey what they wanted to convey to the public. Commission Member Ryan withdrew his second to Commission Member Dahlberg's motion. Motion failed for lack of a second. Chairman Wetzork stated that this discussion would continue at the November meeting.

7.b. Oral Report: Chairman Wetzork – EDC representative to the Pedestrian Task Force

Chairman Wetzork reported that a Pedestrian Task Force meeting was scheduled for November.

7.c. Oral Report: Commission Member Autorino – EDC representative to the City of Alameda Task Force of the Alameda County Climate Protection Project

Commission Member Autorino stated that he had missed the previous evening's meeting. He stated that he would get the minutes and report back to the EDC.

8. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

8.a. Upcoming EDC Agenda Items

Chairman Wetzork reminded all that the EDSP item was being continued to the November meeting.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF

9.a. Staff update – Alameda Theater & Parking Structure Project

Ms. Soto distributed copies of a press release regarding the closure of Central Avenue between Park and Oak Streets, effective October 19. This is being done as part of supplying permanent power to the theater. The opening of the theater is still being planned for March 2008. Ms. Soto also distributed copies of printed flyers describing the new pay machines

planned for the parking garage. This is part of the City's new parking education program.

9.b. Staff update – Changes to the City's Down Payment Assistance Program

Mr. Fonstein recapped the September 18, 2007 City Council agenda report regarding the increase of the maximum loan amounts for this program.

9c. Staff update – Alameda Point Task Force

Mr. Fonstein recapped the history of the City's Exclusive Negotiation Agreement with SunCal and ARRA's direction regarding the composition and role of the Alameda Point Task Force. Chairman Wetzork stated that he was assigning his role as primary EDC representative to Commission Member Schmitz. Commission Member Ryan will be the EDC's alternate representative. The Commission Members were encouraged to attend the SunCal Community Workshop at Mastick Center, scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, October 24.

- Commission Member Lindsey stated that she attended a recent AUSD meeting with Edison and Otis Elementary parents, who were concerned about their children not being able to attend their neighborhood schools. Commission Member Lindsey also requested that information be provided regarding plans to provide AUSD employees with affordable housing.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorene E. Soto
Manager, Business Development Division

DES:rv